

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, EC
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S YEAR-END WRAP-UP

1. SUMMARY. ON JANUARY 4 FONMIN JOSE AYALA LASSO PRESENTED A YEAR-END ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING ECUADOR'S FOREIGN POLICY AND SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES OF INTEREST TO ECUADOR. ECONOMIC MATTERS, INCLUDING ECUADOR'S VIEWS ON NIEO, CERDS, CIEC AND OTHER SUBJECTS, OCCUPIED MOST OF AYALA'S TIME, BUT THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE EVENING WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF ONGOING DISCUSSIONS WITH PERU AIMED AT RESOLUTION OF THE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE. AYALA ALSO STRONGLY SUPPORTED HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES AND THE TERRITORIAL ASPIRATIONS OF OTHER LAS. END SUMMARY.

2. AYALA'S PRESENTATION WAS TYPICAL OF "STATE OF THE MINISTRY" SPEECHES TO DATE: A LOW-KEY, NON-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF WHERE
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ECUADOR'S FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS LIE AND WHAT HIS MINISTRY IS DOING TO PURUSE THOSE INTERESTS. HE BEGAN WITH AN ENUMERATION OF NOW-FAMILIAR FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES: DEFENSE OF SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ALL STATES; NON-INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ALL STATES; PACIFIC SETTLEMENT OF ALL DISPUTES, THROUGH DIRECT NEGOTIATION WHERE POSSIBLE; AND A PEACEFUL WORLD

ORDER BASED ON RESPECT FOR LAW AND A FUNCTIONING SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE. HIS REFERENCE TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY LED HIM TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN TERRITORIAL DISPUTES: GUATEMALA, ARGENTINA, PANAMA AND BOLIVA. HE PRAISED THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES WHICH WILL RESOLVE "ONE OF THE MOST DELICATE PENDING PROBLEMS" AND "ESTABLISH AN EXAMPLE WHICH WILL BE A FORERUNNER OF PEACEFUL AND EQUITABLE SOLUTION" OF THE OTHER PENDING PROBLEMS.

3. AYALA STRONGLY SUPPORTED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES. HE ASSERTED THAT: "THE NORMS AND PRINCIPLES SOLEMNLY ACCEPTED BY NATIONS TO PROMOTE AND PRESERVE HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NO MORE THAN A REFLEXION OF RIGHTS INHERENT TO HUMAN BEINGS, WHICH JUSTIFY LEGITIMATE INTERNATIONAL ACTION WITH NO DEPRECIATION OF RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERVENTION". HE WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO UNDERLINE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CANNOT BE LIMITED TO CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS ALONE. POVERTY, HELPLESSNESS, AND CULTURAL DEPRIVATION ARE ALSO WORTHY OF ATTENTION. HE WENT ON TO DISCUSS IN DETAIL THE STATE OF DEPENDENCE OF LDCS ON THE DEVELOPED WORLD AND THE "DUTY" OF THE LATTER TO TAKE STEPS TO DIMINISH THE GULF BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS.

4. AYALA DWELT VERY LITTLE ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY ONLY RELATIONS WITH IMMEDIATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEIGHBORS COLOMBIA AND PERU. THE REFERENCE TO PERU, HOWEVER, WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE SPEECH AS AYALA ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY A HERETOFORE CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET: THAT ECUADOR AND PERU "HAVE BEEN CARRYING ON PRELIMINARY CONVERSATIONS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE, THROUGH A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE, FORMULAS OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH WILL MAKE POSSIBLE THE SOLUTION OF THE TERRITORIAL PROBLEM UNDER TERMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL HONOR AND WITH THE SOVEREIGN DESTINY OF ECUADOR IN THE AMAZON RIVER." HE NOTED THAT THESE TALKS STEM FROM THE PANAMA TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON WHERE PRESIDENTS OF ECUADOR AND PERU AGREED TO DISCUSS THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, EXCLUDING NO ISSUES. HE ALSO NOTED THE SUPPORT FROM OTHER COUNTRIES FOR THIS APPROACH, SPECIFICALLY NOTING THE US, VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA.

5. THE FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSED AT GREATER LENGTH REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL QUESTIONS. EXPRESSING CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM FOR THE AMAZON BASIN PACT, CLAIMING BROAD INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE 200-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA CONCEPT, DETAILING ECUADOR'S PARTICIPATION IN THE RECENT UNGA AND OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLIES, ETC. HE NOTED THAT THE LOS CONFERENCE HAD ACHIEVED SOME PROGRESS BUT

THAT DIFFICULT PROBLEMS REMAIN TO BE OVERCOME. HE REPEATED ECUADOR'S CLAIM OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT AND CLAIMED A GREAT VICTORY IN OBTAINING ECUADOREAN MEMBERSHIP ON AN EXPANDED UN OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE.

6. ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC MATTERS, AYALA REITERATED ECUADOR'S SUPPORT FOR THE NIEO AND CRITICIZED THE DCS FOR OPPOSING ITS CREATION, SPECIFICALLY THE RESISTANCE TO ESTABLISHING A JUST AND EQUITABLE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRICES FOR MANUFACTURES AND RAW MATERIALS. HE EULOGIZED THE CERDS AS A USEFUL INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENT FOR DEFENDING NATURAL RESOURCES AND FACILITATING THE REGULATION OF FOREIGN CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY. HE NOTED THAT ECUADOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD PARTICIPATED IN UNCTAD DISCUSSIONS OF AN INTEGRATED BASIC PRODUCTS PROGRAM. HE CRITICIZED THE FAILURE OF CEIC TO REACH AGREEMENT ON COMMON RESERVE FUND. ON OTHER INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC MATTERS, AYALA NOTED ECUADOR'S CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR SELA; ITS STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT; AND HE OUTLINED ECUADOR'S ACTIVE EFFORT AS A MEMBER OF ECOSOC ON A VARIETY OF ISSUES. HE NOTED THAT ECUADOR HAS BEEN CHOSEN AS A MEMBER OF THE UNDP ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE.

7. AYALA SUMMARIZED IN PASSING THE GOE'S EFFORTS TO ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT, AND THE BROAD DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, WITH EMPHASIS ON NON-REIMBURSEABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

8. COMMENT: AYALA'S SPEECH WAS VERY CHARACTERISTIC OF HIS PERSONALITY AND TYPICAL OF HIS STEWARDSHIP OF THE MFA: COOL, RESERVED AND ESCHEWING FLASHY OR DRAMATIC GESTURES. IT CATALOGUED IN A BROAD WAY THOSE AREAS OF INTERNATIONAL INTEREST TO ECUADOR. HIS ANNOUNCEMENT OF TALKS WITH PERU GATHERED HEADLINES, BUT HAS OCCASIONED NO PROLONGED COMMENT BY PRESS OR POLITICAL COMMENTATORS, A POSITIVE SIGN THAT THE PUBLIC IS WILLING TO LET THOSE TALKS CONTINUE WITHOUT PRESSING FOR DETAIL. SURPRISINGLY, AYALA'S ONLY MENTION OF THE US WAS IN RELATION TO PANAMA AND TO THE TALKS WITH PERU. THE TRADE ACT, LONG A BONE OF CONTENTION, WAS NOT MENTIONED AT ALL. THIS LACK OF ATTENTION TO THE US BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP CAN BE TAKEN AS A SIGN OF THE STABLE, NON-CONTROVERSIAL STATE OF THE RELATIONSHIP TODAY. END COMMENT. BLOOMFIELD

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